Elizabeth Lopez

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Dr. McInerney

Bilingual 4150-Foundations of Literacy in

Linguistically Different Classrooms

George, Jean Craighead. “*My Side of the Mountain,”*. New York: Scholastic Inc. 1959, 1988. 177 pages. Ages 11-13. Genre: **Survival Story**. Language: English

“*My side of the Mountain”* is a story about survival and determination. It was written by Jean Craighead George and it was illustrated by him as well. The book has a main character named Sam Gribely which plays the main character is tired of living in the crowdy city of New York and decides to run away to Catskill mountain in the middle of nowhere, there he finds ways to stay alive and comes up with new and inventive ways to catch food and build himself a shelter. With all of his determination Sam lives a happy life in the wilderness not only does he discover new ways to sustain himself but he also comes to find out about himself in the process.

I find this book to be interesting and inspiring to see such determination from someone. The main character takes up a huge responsibility by leaving all of his accommodations and family in order to begin his journey alone in the wilderness. The author who is also the illustrator makes you get the feeling as though you are also there with this young man in his journey. You are able to see his ups and downs throughout the story. It is noticeable in the story how the character is put to be a person with courage and a lot of determination to make his life in the wild the best he can have. It is interesting to know that there is people who prefer to live secluded and by themselves away from the city life. We are so used to depending on our technology and we so are accustomed to the “easy life” that we do not acknowledge the hard work that some people have to go through to even cook a meal.

Reviewed by: Elizabeth Lopez

Cisneros, Sandra. “*House on Mango Street,”*. Arte Publico Press 1st Ed. Vintage Contemporaries 2nd Ed, 1984, 1991. 110 pages. Ages 12-14. Genre: **Contemporary fiction**. Language: English

This story is about the life of Esperanza, a young girl living in Mango Street. This story’s setting is in Chicago and this story is about Esperanza’s experiences living in a “Chicano” neighborhood. Throughout the story Esperanza gets older and begins to develop both physically and mentally. Esperanza learns to overcome the challenges that she has experienced and feels ready to leave Mango Street behind.

“*House on Mango Street”* is one of my favorite stories. I like how the author, Sandra Cisneros, does her own portrayal of the Chicano family. Many readers can relate to the main character Esperanza. This story is of a young girl who is coming of age and it talks about her own experiences living with her family and her ups and downs she went through. Throughout the whole story we watch Esperanza grow into a young woman. I think that I personally find this story intriguing because I as well as Esperanza am Chicana and I relate to her in that sense. In comparison with other stories where one cannot really place oneself in that story because we can’t really relate to the main character.

Reviewed by: Elizabeth Lopez

Baker, Rachel. *“The First Woman Doctor”*. Simond & Schulster Inc. 1944. 188 pages. Ages 11-14. Genre: **Non-fiction**. Language: English

The book “T*he First Woman Doctor”* is about Elizabeth Blackwell who was determined to be a doctor back in 1840. During this time there were no women doctors in America, but this did not stop her from pursuing her career. The author portrays Blackwell as a strong-willed woman who did not let anything stop her from being a doctor.

Rachel Baker portrayal of Dr. Blackwell is of a person who she admires and praises. I agree with the author, I believe that Dr. Blackwell has opened many doors to a lot of women who since then persevered their dreams to become doctors as well. Elizabeth Blackwell should be an inspiration to all women, she has proved that nothing in life is impossible. Blackwell’s determination paid off and she broke all the boundaries that restricted women to be doctors.

Reviewed by: Elizabeth Lopez

Gormely, Beatrice. *“Fifth Grade Magic”.* E.P Dutton Inc. 1982. 128 pages. Ages 8-12. Genre: **Traditional Literature.** Language: English

This book is about a girl named Gretchen Nichols who is in fifth grade. The story is about the adventures that her fairy godmother and Gretchen have. Errora, which is Gretchen’s fairy god mother appears to her one night while Gretchen sleeps. When times in school get tough Gretchen relies on her fairy godmother to bail her out of trouble and help her get the part she desperately wants in her school play.

*“Fifth Grade Magic”* kept me entertained. I found it to be a good book for young readers. I think many readers can relate to the character of Gretchen because we have all in some way felt as if our small problems seemed huge. We can go back and see it humorous to have thought that, but a fairy godmother would be any young child’s dream to have. This book sparks the imagination of any reader who reads this book. Personally, I think it would be great to have a fairy godmother to solve my problems.

Reviewed by: Elizabeth Lopez

Harvey, Jayne. *“Great-Uncle Dracula and the Dirty Rat”.*  Random House. 1993. 62 pages. Ages 8-11. Genre: **Traditional Literature**. Language: English

This book talks about two siblings Emily Normal, and Elliot, who move to Transylvania with their uncle who is a vampire. The book is funny and entertaining to read. The book is not to long so it does not get boring. Throughout the chapters it has new adventures that Emily and Elliot have in their new school and the mischievous things that they put their Great Uncle Dracula through. Emily has a tough time adapting to her new school when on the other hand her brother Elliot adapts quite easily. They feel quite normal even though they have a vampire as an uncle.

This book is humorous and fun to read. Not many books portray a vampire as a nice and loving uncle and the author Jayne Harvey was able to portray the vampire as that. I think children might also enjoy reading it because it deals with the experience of having to move from another school and adapt to a new one. It is amusing to see the trouble that her brother and she get into. I think this book gives insight to young readers in how to deal with new surroundings. Even though it gives its insight in its own unique way. I was intrigued by the book and I think many young readers will agree and say this book is worth reading.

Reviewed by: Elizabeth Lopez

Cox, Judy. *“Go to Sleep Groundhog”.* Scholastic Inc. 2005. Ages 6-7. 28 pages. Genre: **Picture Book**. Language: English

This book by Judy Cox is a colorful and educational book to read to young kids. This book attracts your attention with its drawings and bright colors. Its main character the groundhog goes through the winter months sleeping waiting for February 2nd to come along. Once the groundhog realizes that it is still winter he goes back into his home and decides he still has 6 more weeks of winter so he decides it still isn’t time for him to wake up. The book “G*o to Sleep Groundhog”* focuses on Groundhog’s Day and it gives children a colorful and short story of what Groundhog Day is.

I really liked this book because of its wonderful illustrations and I like how the pictures are big and they tell you the story all on their own. I also think this book is not only entertaining for children to read but they are also learning while reading it. This story gives a short overview of Groundhog’s Day, but does it in a way that young children might feel intrigued. The sentences in this book aren’t too long and the words are big so it is easy for new readers to read.

Reviewed by: Elizabeth Lopez

Fleming, Denise. *“Beetle Bop”*. Scholastic Inc. 2008. 28 pages. Ages: 6 Genre: **Picture Book**. Language: English

“*Beetle Bop”* is a book about beetles and it uses rhyme and rhythm throughout the whole book. The book plays with color, and patterns. The book is a counting book and it is also a color book. This book can be for new readers, because they will find this book easy to read. One can also use this book to read to young children who might just be learning to count or learning to distinguish between colors.

This book is two in one it helps kids learn the colors and it also has a fun counting theme. It has rhythm and a nice rhyme to it throughout the whole book. It has small one word structure. It also gives you small sentences in every couple of pages. The lettering in the book is big and eye catching. Whether you are the one reading the book or the one listening to it being read to you this book catches anyone’s eye.

Reviewed by: Elizabeth Lopez

Park, Barbara. *“Junie B. Jones and some Sneaky Peeky Spying”.* Random House Inc. 1994. 63 pages. Ages 9-11. Genre: **Traditional literature.** Language: English

Junie B. Jones is a young kindergartner who is very curious to find out what is going on everywhere around her. She is a quite outspoken young girl who gets herself into trouble with her curiosity. Junie B. is quite smart for her age and it shows throughout the story. This book has humor and it makes you laugh every time Junie B. gets herself into a mess.

This is one of my favorite books it never fails to put a smile on my face. The story makes you remember of when we were young and we had never ending questions about everything and anything. Children can relate to this character because most of us were like Junie B. we always seemed to want to know everything and always made our own assumptions of how things were. The way the author wrote the book makes us feel as if the story is being told to us by Junie B. herself. She used the same type of language a 7 year old girl would. This makes us feel even more relatable to the main character herself.

Reviewed by: Elizabeth Lopez

Morrison, Toni. *“ The Bluest Eye”.* Penguin Group. 1970. 215 pages. Ages 15-. Genre: **Young adult novel** Language: English

This book by the author Toni Morrison exposes many painful and devastating events that occurred in the life of a young girl named Pecola Breedlove. Pecola, which is the main character in this book is exposed to racism, incest, and a lifetime of loneliness. She is a young African-American 11 year old girl who lives in Lorain, Ohio and is exposed by a very young age to many hardships that a girl at that age should not experience. This young girl only hopes to one day wake up with big blue eyes. That will be her wish she asks for every night before she goes to bed. She never gets discouraged with the possibility of waking up with blue eyes. Her wish seems to be the only thing keeping Pecola hopeful.

While reading this book I found this story to have a tone of sadness. The author puts many issues in this story. Not only does she talk about racism but also the incest that occurs in this story. When reading this story one feels bad for the characters that are in it and we wish that soon something good will happen. The young girls hope to someday acquiring those blue eyes she wants keeps her with hope. This hope is the one that makes her live day by day and she somehow puts all her hardships behind her. To the young girl once she actually has her blue eyes everything will be perfect and she won’t ever have to be sad anymore. This exposes the view some people had about beauty. To some people you had to have blue eyes and be light skinned to be happy and in this book we see how those views kept this girl wishing for blue eyes.

Reviewed by: Elizabeth Lopez

Blume, Judy. “*Fudge-A-Mania.* Bantam Doubleday Dell Books for Young Readers. 1990. 147 pages. Ages 9-11. Genre: **Contemporary realistic fiction.** Language: English

“*Fudge-A-Mania* is a humorous story about a family containing Peter his younger brother who they call Fudge and Peter’s sworn enemy Sheila Tubman. During the story Peter and his family go on a family vacation. To Peter’s surprise Sheila is there also with her family. This was the worst thing that could have happened to him, or at least he thought. His younger brother Fudge then gets a small crush on Sheila that is when this story gets interesting and the humor begins.

Judy Blume was one of my favorite authors when I was in grade school. I enjoyed all her books especially the ones with the adventures of Peter and his family. “*Fudge-A-Mania* is one of my favorite books because it talks about the rivalry one has with their younger siblings. This book is comical and you can’t do anything but laugh at the story and how it unfolds. I personally believe Judy Blume is a great author who exposes many real life family issues but she does it in a way that her readers can relate to it and feel just like the character himself.

Reviewed by: Elizabeth Lopez

Tan, Amy. *“The Joy Luck Club”.* Ballantine Books. 1989. 337 pages. Ages 14-18. Genre: **Young Adult Novel.** Language: English

“*The Joy Luck club”* is a book that goes between the lives of four Chinese women in 1949. The story also goes between there American born daughters who live in California. This book has a unique dialogue that not too many books have. One has to pay attention to the changes that the chapters in the book has. The chapters go from one story to another and if you aren’t clear on what story you are reading you might get confused in the end. The book is about the lives of all these different women and how they all adapt in their own way to living in America.

This book caught my attention because I can relate in some way or another to the characters. Coming from a Mexican family we have some views that differ from the American way. We need to learn to be able to embrace our culture but also we in some way or another embrace the American culture as well because it is a part of our everyday life. I agree with Amy Tan’s representation of culture awareness. I also thing we need to be able to appreciate your culture completely.

Reviewed by: Elizabeth Lopez

Ada, Flor Alma. “*Me llamo Maria Isabel”.* Aladdin Paperbacks. 1996. 63 pages. Genre: **Chapter Book.** Language: Spanish

Alma Flor Ada’s portrayal of the young Maria Isabel is marvelous and it is a book that shows a young Hispanic girl love for her name and her heritage. This story starts with Maria’s arrival and a new house and having to adapt to a new school and with new friends. The least thing she expected was her teacher changing her name. When reading it you can tell the young girls love for her name and how much it really means to her. She finally gets the opportunity to let out her feelings when the teacher gives them an assignment. That is when Maria Isabel’s experience in the new neighborhood began to change for the better.

Many Hispanic readers should be able to relate to Maria and her struggles that she had arriving in a new school and feeling alone. It is even worse when your own teacher decides to change your name because there are too many Maria’s in that class. This poor young girl gets thrown into an uncomfortable situation but she manages to get out. We all know how scary a first day at school could be so we all sympathize for this young girl. I think this book is a great book for any young child to read. I don’t think this book is only for Hispanic children I think this book should be read by everyone, because we should all be able to relate to Maria Isabel.

Reviewed by: Elizabeth Lopez

Jardin Du, Rosamond. “*Practically Seventeen”.* Harper & Roy.1949. 202 pages. Ages 15-17. Genre: **Young Adult Novel.** Language: English

This book I would consider to be a young adult novel because of its main topics it has. The book goes between high school relationships, marriage, kids, and love. The main characters of the book are Tobey, and Brose. Tobey and Brose have been high school sweethearts but neither are sure if they want to be in a serious commitment with one another. Summer vacation arrives and that is when their fate will be decided. Time will only tell if there love is true and able to cross the many obstacles they might come across.

I like this book because it deals with young adults who have to deal with the many challenges that life brings us. It deals with serious issues like marriage, love, and children. The story unfolds and you are able to see this young love grow and go through hardships. Many young adults readers can relate to this because it is a part of growing up. We all have to deal with hardships and triumphs, so this book is a refresher and lets us know that we are not the only ones dealing with decision making issues.

Reviewed by: Elizabeth Lopez

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